

**Submission
No 336**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
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I moved to Sydney from Chicago in 2015. Chicago is a vibrant, 24 hour city with a what seems like never ending choice of venues to attend for a night out involving music, dancing and freedom of expression. In Chicago, our music events run well into the night, some ending at 2am. It is a world class city and a major hub to the United States for tourism, music, food and fashion. The streets are constantly buzzing with bright and unique outfits that give the greatest vibe of culture, freedom, and even unity. Ever since I moved to Sydney, this vibe has disappeared from my life completely. I love Sydney and everything that Australia has welcomed me to, but if I could change one major thing about this state, it would be the complete lack of nightlife, expression and culture, and the over saturation of police officers.

My father was a homicide detective for over 30 years in Chicago. I grew up very respectful of law enforcement officers and even had dreams of becoming one myself.

My view towards police officers has completely changed since I've moved to Sydney. Considering how low the levels of crime are here, I can't comprehend why this heavy handed police presence is necessary. It is morally unjust to force so many civilians to undergo this humiliating and traumatic procedure of strip searches based on one officers whim which is inaccurate more times than not.

The first thing I picked up on when I moved here is how terrified everyone is to encounter the police, which made me very sad to hear. This is not just people in my age group, I hear this from parents, teachers, doctors, and more. Police officers should be serving and protecting, not intimidating, harassing and out to get you for anything they can. I have learned from my peers here to avoid the police at all costs to prevent unnecessary stops and unwarranted searches. I will not go to them if I need help. I find myself having the need to dress in black and gray when I go to the city so I don't stand out and have police harass me. This is completely shameful.

The lockout laws are the tip of the iceberg in a strategy the NSW government has put in place to keep "control" of the population. A scared population is a compliant one, and Sydney does a great job of suppressing it's population to fit their idea of a cookie cutter citizen. Bring me a city that boasts self expression, art and color, where people can walk the streets in their bright and funky outfits to bring joy to others without getting accused of being on drugs. Sometimes the city feels suffocating! Bring me a city where the youth have other ways to have fun than getting drunk in a bar. Bring me a city where artists actually want to travel to, that doesn't have ridiculous laws to extort festival owners to pay \$200,000 or go bust. Give me a city where I, as an adult, can make my own decisions how I want to spend my night, how I want to spend my money, how I want to enjoy my life. When NSW can bring this to it's citizens is the day that Sydney can accurately brag about being a world class city. Until major changes are made surrounding the lock out laws, lack of night time economy, and over saturation of aggressive and unfriendly police officers, the only thing Sydney will be to the rest of world is a laughing stock.